



## **Remote Participation Study Committee**

Date: **January 31, 2023**

Time: **7:30 – 9:00 pm**

Location: Hybrid – Health and Human Services conference room + Zoom via Neat Bar pro and dual displays.

### **Minutes**

Attendance: Mustafa Varoglu, Alex Bagnall, Eric Helmuth, James Feeney, Janice Cagan-Teuber, Guillermo Hamlin. Stacie Smith joined at approximately 8:15 p.m.

### **AGENDA**

1. Review and accept meeting minutes from Dec 20 meeting – 10 minutes
2. Public Comment - 10 minutes
3. Introduction new member: Guillermo Hamlin – 5 min
4. Hybrid demo current and next steps – 60+ minutes
  - Review of which boards, committees and commissions have agreed to the pilot program, and which have started (and any feedback)
  - Update on which boards, commissions and committees are using which rooms and technology
  - Review of hybrid meeting support materials on website
5. Future business – 5 minutes

### **Summary of Discussion:**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:42 p.m.

Approval of minutes from last meeting was deferred to the next meeting.

There was no public comment.

The committee welcomed Guillermo Hamlin, appointed by the Moderator to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Jennifer Susse. Mr. Hamlin outlined his background in the hybrid and remote meeting technology space for municipalities and universities.

The Committee reviewed pilot program participation and updates on board, commission and committee participation and use of rooms and technology.

- **Arlington Tourism and Economic Development (A-TED)** - no updates.
- **Diversity Task Group**: - no updates
- **Rainbow Commission** – awaiting response to invitation to participate.
- **Zoning Board of Appeals**: Mustafa and Jim are helping them plan a hybrid practice/test session on Feb. 13 using a Neat Bar Pro.
- **Disability Commission** used hybrid on Dec. 31. Good experience overall except for a Zoom account scheduling conflict that resulted in early, abrupt termination of their meeting. Jim Feeney suspects it was caused by a staff member using the wrong Zoom account.
- **Finance Committee** - not officially in the pilot to date, but Jim reported they have previously used Meeting Owls with good results. Last night they used a Neat board with 16 members in person and 2 remote participants with very good results. ACMi reported excellent audio pickup. The chair added FinCom to the pilot program table.
- **Tree Committee** – no updates
- **Clean Energy Futures Committee** – Now using Neat Bar Pro with better results than the Owls. Eric Helmuth reports excellent experiences over multiple meetings, with most members remote.

Other discussion

- Jim Feeney reported that town staff are using hybrid tools for staff meetings. The Owls are very portable and very flexible but have a high burden of setup each time. The Town is moving toward Neat Bars/Neat Boards for most meetings.
- A member reported receiving one report of a Town committee using a personal free Zoom account. Jim Feeney said he would out and connect committee chair to use of a Town account to ensure correct link sharing for meeting notices, and capture of any optional meeting recordings to Town's cloud account.
- Operating recommendations for when a remote participant drops off - GH left this meeting and we didn't notice for 5 minutes that he was pending entry from the waiting room again.
- This committee discussed its own experiences with hybrid at tonight's meeting. One member reported some difficulty understanding participants; the other reported it was average quality. It was noted that the room surfaces were all hard and that audio quality may be improved with wall panels. A member attending remotely noted that when participants in the room talk over each other, the automated transcription becomes useless. In addition, one member left the meeting for a short period but got stuck in waiting room for 5 minutes upon attempting to rejoin until the Zoom operator noticed.

### Future Business

A member inquired if hybrid Town Meeting was being considered on the table? Eric Helmuth stated that unlike other public meetings, hybrid town meeting is not currently provided for by law. Discussion ensued about the future technology and operational considerations should future Town Meetings attempt hybrid operation upon a potential change in state law that enables it.

Next meeting: February 21 at 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m. by a unanimous vote.

**Summary table of hybrid meeting participants**

Feb 21, 2023 RPSC meeting

Hybrid Pilot Summary Status

#	Committee, Board or Commission	In Pilot?	Proposed Room	First Hybrid Meeting Date	Time	Technology	Committee Support	
2	<del>Tourism and Economic Development*</del>	No	<del>TH Annex First Floor (or TM Conf. Room?)</del>			<del>Two Owls</del>	<del>Mustafa</del>	Confirmed not participating
3	Diversity Task Group	Yes	Town Hall Annex 2nd Floor	Thursday, Dec. 8th	6:45 PM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Alex	2 meetings (12/8 and 2/9) with survey results + 1 chair
4	LGBTQIA Rainbow Commission	Yes	HHS Conference Room	Thurs, Nov. 17	6:30 PM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Mustafa	Go through Jill Harvey (Jim)
5	Disability Commission	Yes	HHS Conference Room	Wed. Dec. 21	4:00 PM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Janice	3 hybrid meetings, 6 people onsite, 10 remote. One Chair has filled out survey, Is survey accessible for Jaws.
6	Arlington Human Rights Commission	Likely (TBC)	HHS Conference Room	Wed. Dec. 21	7:30 PM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Stacie	Only a member of the public, no members or chair responses Go through Jill Harvey (Jim)
7	Tree Committee	Yes	Town Hall Annex 2nd Floor	Wednesday, Nov. 9th	7:30 PM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Eric	12/14 only responses,
8	Zoning Board of Appeals	Likely (TBC)	Town Hall Annex 2nd Floor	Test on Feb 13	7:30 PM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Mustafa	Demo'ed on 2/13.
9	<del>Arlington Redevelopment Board</del>	<del>Confirmed no sound issues</del>	<del>Community Center Big Hall A or B</del>	<del>Monday, November 21</del>	<del>7:30 PM</del>	<del>NeatBar</del>	Rachel	Confirmed not participating
10	Clean Energy Future Committee	Yes	Town Hall Annex 2nd Floor	Friday Dec 16	8:15 AM	NeatBarPro, 2 Flat Panels	Eric	1/20, 12/16, + upcoming meeting. 1 chair response (11/9)

11	Finance Committee	Yes	APD Community Room	Jan 30	7:00 pm	NeatBoard	Alex	Admin told Jim it was successful for 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting Ask to fill out survey, no results yet.
	Long Range Planning Committee	Need to ask	Town Manager's Conference room	Monthly (2/17)	8:00 AM	2 Owls, will be upgraded to NeatBar w monitor	Eric	Steve DeCoursey participates in person, Len Diggins, participates remotely <b>Add to Survey</b>